

SYSTEM AND SERVICES FOR HANDLING COMPUTING ENVIRONMENTS AS DOCUMENTS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for describing computing environments as electronic documents, programs or other types of electronic representation or data. The environment description can be easily created, transferred and ultimately used to create the specified environment for use by an end user, or users, in many different applications. The invention provides abstraction software and a user interface to allow a human user to specify a definition for the computing environment. Desired components are selected and included in the environment definition. Default components can be provided to help a user design a viable environment. Hardware and software components can also be associated with constraints so that, for example, incompatible components such as software that can not run on different central processing units, under certain operating systems, etc., will not be selected. Abstraction software can also use parameters to associate additional qualities, restrictions or properties with components. Environment definitions can be stored and transferred in a manner compatible with typical electronic information. Copies of definitions can be made. Definitions can be viewed by application programs, browsers, etc. Definitions can be edited by users with similar types of software, or with other, dedicated software. Environment definitions can be installed onto hardware and software resources by installation software. Environments can be installed on specific components from which the environment was originally abstracted, or on other sufficiently similar components. Environments can be remotely manipulated and accessed from computers, terminals, web browsers, handheld devices, or other devices. Various services can be provided, or implemented, with the system of the present invention. Examples of services include allowing interactive selection and loading of environments, uploading previously saved environments for storage and future use, replicating environments and distributing the environments as for a corporate-wide deployment in several countries, etc.

SF 1231248 v1